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# Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

Smithsonian Institution
Washington DC

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## The Museum

In 1938, the Congress of the United States legislated a new gallery within the Smithsonian Institution intended to encourage interest in contemporary art. Almost thirty years later, in 1966, philanthropist Joseph H. Hirshhorn (1899–1981), a Latvian-born immigrant who came to America at age six, donated his entire art collection to the United States, a gift that made it possible to fulfill the Congressional mandate for a contemporary art museum. Funds for a building to house the collection were appropriated by Congress in 1969 (Mr. Hirshhorn contributed an additional one million dollars), and the new museum opened in October 1974, with a collection of 4,000 paintings and drawings and 2,000 pieces of sculpture.

While the nucleus of the collection remains Joseph Hirshhorn's original gift, it has been greatly enriched by Mr. Hirshhorn's bequest of the art he had collected since 1966. Other benefactors—collectors and artists among them—have given works to the Museum; and purchases made from funds provided by Congress, the Smithsonian's Board of Regents, and private donors have helped broaden the scope of the collection.

## Its Architecture

*"If it were not controversial in almost every way it would hardly qualify as a place to house contemporary art. For it must somehow be symbolic of the material it is designed to encase."*—S. Dillon Ripley, former Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, at the opening of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in 1974.

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden was designed by Gordon Bunshaft, then chief designer for the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in New York (Bunshaft also designed Lever House in New York, among many other structures). The building, a circular reinforced concrete structure, 231 feet in diameter, is placed on four massive piers, 14 feet above the ground, to open up a plaza area and provide space for the display of sculpture. Over 75 pieces of sculpture are exhibited on the plaza and in the adjacent Sculpture Garden, which offers an intimate outdoor gallery experience.

Inside the Museum, the permanent collection is displayed on the second and third floors. Sculpture is exhibited in the inner galleries, or ambulatories, which are naturally lighted by floor-to-ceiling windows; paintings and drawings are installed in the outer galleries. The lower level, used mostly for special exhibitions, also houses a 280-seat auditorium. Administrative offices and the library are on the fourth floor.

*Richard Estes (American, b. 1936)*
Waverly Place, *1980, oil on canvas*
*Museum purchase, 1980*

## Sculpture

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden houses one of the world's major collections of modern sculpture. Honoré Daumier's satiric legislators, Henri Matisse's sequential heads and backs, Auguste Rodin's powerful figures, Alexander Calder's playful mobiles and stabiles, and Joseph Cornell's evocative boxes are only a few of the works in a collection that also encompasses examples by Jean Arp, Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, Anthony Caro, Edgar Degas, Jean Dubuffet, Max Ernst, Alberto Giacometti, Louise Nevelson, Pablo Picasso, Medardo Rosso, Man Ray, and David Smith, as well as the largest public collection of sculpture by Henry Moore in the United States. On the plaza and in the Sculpture Garden can be seen monumental works by these and other sculptors, including Emile-Antoine Bourdelle, Barbara Hepworth, Claes Oldenburg, George Rickey, and Kenneth Snelson. Also on the plaza is the largest sculpture in the collection—the 42-foot-high, 30-ton *Isis* by Mark di Suvero—which provides a bright, angular counterpoint to the concrete curves of the building.

*Henry Moore (British, b. 1898)*
King and Queen, *1952–53, bronze*

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*Frank Stella (American, b. 1936)*
Quaquà! Attaccati Là! 4x, *1985, oil, urethane enamel, fluorescent alkyd, acrylic, and printing ink on canvas, etched magnesium, and fiberglass*
*Museum purchase, 1985*

## Paintings

With its focus on painting in the United States from the pioneering work of the great artist and teacher Thomas Eakins to the innovative productions of contemporary artists, the collection provides an opportunity to study the various trends and developments in American art. The Museum has extensive collections of work by such well-known and influential artists as Milton Avery, Stuart Davis, Robert Henri, Edward Hopper, Morris Louis, George Luks, Kenneth Noland, Larry Rivers, and others.

Appropriate for a museum whose collections have come primarily from an immigrant to this country, there is an unusually large representation of works by immigrant artists, who have so greatly enriched the American art of this century, among them Josef Albers, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, Hans Hofmann, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Abraham Walkowitz, and Max Weber. Complementing the representation of American art is work by a variety of modern European and Latin masters, including Francis Bacon, Balthus, Fernando Botero, George Grosz, René Magritte, Matta, Joan Miró, Joaquín Torres-García, and Victor Vasarely.

## Other Holdings

The variety and scope of the collection is reflected in the diversity of its 2,500 works on paper, which are divided among drawings, prints, watercolors, and gouaches dating from the late 19th century to the present day and concentrating on European and American artists.

Oscar Bluemner, Willem de Kooning, Thomas Eakins, Louis Eilshemius, Philip Evergood, and Raphael Soyer are examples of the many artists who are represented by works in several media. The Thomas Eakins collection, one of the largest in the country, comprises paintings, drawings, sculpture, photographs, documents, and memorabilia. The Museum also holds a significant group of drawings by 20th-century sculptors, among them Alexander Calder, Chaim Gross, Gaston Lachaise, Giacomo Manzù, Marino Marini, Elie Nadelman, and George Segal. Some of these were done as preliminary studies for three-dimensional works in the collection. Sculptor Henry Moore is another example of the Museum's concentration on an individual artist; his nearly 60 sculptures are complemented by 20 works on paper.

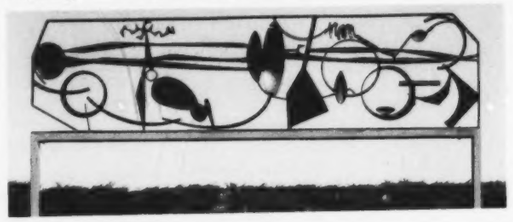
*Jasper Johns (American, b. 1930)*
Study for "Painting with Two Balls," *1960, charcoal on paper*

*Thomas Eakins (American, 1844–1916)*
Mrs. Thomas Eakins, *c. 1899, oil on canvas*

## Exhibitions and Publications

Since only a portion of the Museum's permanent collection can be on view at any one time, the galleries are changed frequently. Special exhibitions—both of works from the permanent collection and works lent by public and private collections—are organized by the Museum staff and documented by catalogs intended to serve the general public and scholars alike. Thomas Eakins, Louis Eilshemius, Arshile Gorky, Joan Miró, Larry Rivers, David Smith, and Raphael Soyer are several of the many artists whose works have been exhibited with accompanying catalogs. Other projects, like the biennial *Directions* series, explore the newest trends in contemporary art. Touring exhibitions and loans to other museums also form an increasingly active part of the program.

*David Smith (American, 1906–65)*
Pittsburgh Landscape, *1954, painted steel*



## Tours

All tours are free and begin at the Information Desk on the plaza level. Museum docents give general tours of the Museum Mondays through Saturdays at 10:30 a.m., 12 noon, and 1:30 p.m. and Sundays at 12:30, 1:30, and 2:30 p.m. Group tours for students, kindergarten and up, are available by appointment. Tours of special exhibitions are offered by members of the Museum's staff; days and times are available at the Information Desk. Tours on any subject appropriate to the Museum's collections or exhibitions may be arranged through the Education Department. Call 357-3235.

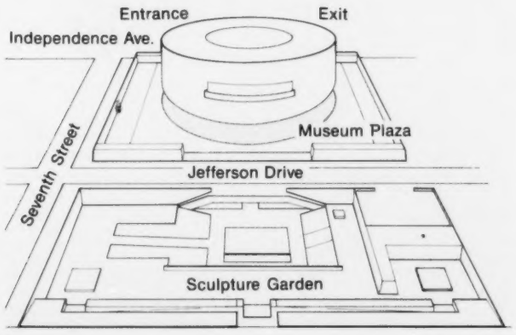
## Handicapped

Sculpture tours for the blind and visually impaired and sign-language tours are available by appointment. Call 357-3235.

Wheelchairs are available in the checkroom, lower level, or visitors may bring their own wheelchairs into the Museum through the emergency doors to the main lobby. The staff elevator may be used for wheelchairs. Ramps permit access to the Sculpture Garden.

## Outreach

The Education Department offers in-classroom presentations for students 4th grade and up and for senior citizen and other groups within an 11-mile radius of the Museum. "Light and Shadow," which introduces 4th and 5th graders to the use of these elements in art, and "What Is Modern Art?," which acquaints 5th and 6th graders with the principles of 20th-century painting and sculpture, are examples of outreach programs offered. Teacher workshops for in-service credit can be arranged. Call 357-3235.



*Willem de Kooning*
*(American, b. the Netherlands 1904)*
Seated Man, *c. 1939, oil on canvas*
*Gift of the artist through the Joseph H. Hirshhorn Foundation, 1972*

## General Information

*Hours* The Museum is open free to the public from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. every day except Christmas Day. Extended summer hours are determined annually. The Sculpture Garden is open throughout the year from 7:30 a.m. until dusk.

*Metro* The nearest Metro station is L'Enfant Plaza (take Maryland Avenue and 7th Street exit).

*Parking* There is a pay parking garage at the Air and Space Museum; enter on 7th Street between Independence Avenue and Jefferson Drive SW.

*Facilities* Restrooms, drinking fountains, and public telephones are located on the lower level.

*Checkroom* Parcels, briefcases, and umbrellas must be left at the free checkroom on the lower level.

*Strollers* Because of the damage strollers can cause to low-hanging paintings, they are not permitted in the galleries. They must be left at the checkroom, where infant backpacks are available without charge.

*Photography* Use of flash or tripods is not permitted inside the Museum. Visitors are welcome to use handheld cameras.

*Museum Shop* The Museum Shop, located on the lower level, sells publications on the permanent collection, exhibition catalogs, art books, postcards, slides, posters, reproductions, art periodicals, and unique museum-related items such as art jewelry.

*Plaza Café* An outdoor café serving moderately priced sandwiches and salads amidst monumental sculptures, is open during the summer months. Hours and dates are determined annually.

*Library* The 12,000-volume library may be consulted by outside scholars by appointment.

*Film Program* Documentaries on art and artists are shown Thursdays at noon and Saturdays at 1:00 p.m. Films made by artists, including "experimental" films and films by independent filmmakers, are screened Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00 p.m. Short animated films for young people are shown Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. Admission to films is free. There are no films during the summer months.

*Auguste Rodin (French, 1840–1917)*
Monument to Balzac, *1898, bronze*

*Special Events* Lectures related to the permanent collection and special exhibitions are offered periodically. Other special events include symposia and concerts.

*Calendar* A schedule of exhibitions, films, lectures, and other events is published three times a year. To receive the calendar, send your name and address to: Public Affairs, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. 20560.

*Smithsonian Associates* Three Associate programs—National, Resident, and Contributing—provide an opportunity to participate in activities at the Hirshhorn and the Smithsonian Institution at large. While all three offer many of the same benefits, including group travel programs, discounts on books and Museum Shop purchases, discounts for paid events and special courses, and subscription to the monthly magazine *Smithsonian,* each involves a different level of participation. For additional information, inquire at the Information Desk; or write to the Associates' Reception Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560; or call 357-2700.

*Telephone* Area code 202

General information 357-2700
Education Department 357-3235
Press Office 357-1618
Museum Shop 357-1429
Library 357-3222
Other Departments 357-1300
Dial-a-Museum (recording of Smithsonian special events) 357-2020

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Independence Avenue at 8th Street SW
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